

Q1
Sub SC17

1 1. (Amended) A cover assembly for a microplate, said assembly comprising:
2 a layer of material shaped and dimensioned to removably seal a plurality of a mi-
3 croplate's well openings;
4 a pressure plate disposed on said layer of material for dispersing a compressive
5 force in a generally uniform manner across said layer; a cover having a top and
6 first and second sides, said top shaped so as to generate said compressive force
7 when said cover is engaged with said microplate, said first and second sides each
8 including a ledge for supporting a bottom edge of said microplate ;
9 a plurality of vertical tabs extending downward from said ledges; and
10 a plurality of apertures in said cover that register with said tabs, whereby a plu-
11 rality of the covers can be stacked with the vertical tabs on a cover extending
12 down into the apertures of a cover that is disposed beneath.

1 2. (Amended) The cover assembly as in claim 1 wherein said top and pressure plate each
2 include one or more longitudinally-extending tabs which enable said cover to be engaged
3 with or disengaged from said microplate by a robotic system.

Sub SC27
Q2

1 11. (New) The cover assembly of claim 1 wherein said cover top includes a central,
2 longitudinally extending planar ridge portion and lateral and planar portions extending
3 upwardly from said ridge at their inner edges, said sides extending downwardly from the
4 outer edges of said planar portions, whereby the said planar portions and said ridge pro-
5 vide a resilient force that bears downward on said pressure plate and upward on the bot-
6 tom edges of said microplate.
7 12. (New) The assembly of claim 1 including longitu-
8 dinal tabs, extending tabs from said first and second sides, whereby said cover may be
9 disengaged from or engaged with said microplate by displacing said tabs laterally out-
10 wardly or inwardly to move said ledges away from or beneath said bottom edges of said
11 microplate.

Rule 126
12

1 13. (New) A cover assembly for a microplate, said assembly comprising:

2 a layer of material shaped and dimensioned to removably seal a plurality of a mi-
3 croplate's well openings;
4 a pressure plate disposed on said layer of material for dispersing a compressive
5 force in a generally uniform manner across said layer; and
6 a cover having a top an first and second sides, said top including a central, lon-
7 gitudinally extending planar ridge portion and lateral planar portions extending
8 upwardly from said ridge at their inner edges , said sides extending downwardly
9 from the outer edges of said planar portions and including ledges that extend be-
10 neath bottom edges of said microplate; whereby the said planar portions and said
11 ridge portion provide a resilient force that bears downward on said pressure plate
12 and upward on the bottom edges of said microplate.

13
14. (New) The assembly of claim 13 including longitudinal tabs, extending tabs from
2 said first and second sides, whereby said cover may be disengaged from or engaged with
3 said microplate by displacing said tabs laterally outwardly or inwardly to move said
4 ledges away from or beneath said bottom edges of said microplate.

REMARKS

We have amended claim 1 to specify ledges supporting the bottom edge of the microplate, with tabs extending downwardly from the ledges, together with apertures in the cover that register with the ledges. This feature, which facilitates stacking of the cover assemblies, is nowhere to be found or suggested in the references of record. For example, Moring et al. describes an embodiment in which downwardly extending members 184 snap into place to support the plates on ledges 186b. These members do not include tabs that might be used for stacking. Indeed this would not be possible, in as much as the downward projections have cam surfaces 186a that force the ledges 186b out-